

### **May 2004**

The Washington WorkFirst Study (WFS) sample was drawn from the statewide list of adults receiving welfare assistance in October 2001 (2001 cohort). The 2001 cohort respondents were interviewed in early 2002. This report uses survey data from 1,004 interviews with the 2001 cohort.

This report describes job preparation activities among WorkFirst participants. In addition, the effects of the Job Search Workshop, Job Skills Training, Pre-Employment Training, and Community Jobs are estimated using multivariate analysis.

Employment information for this analysis came from state Unemployment Insurance files. State administrative files provided information on TANF receipt and client activities. Personal and family characteristics were gathered from the WFS telephone survey.

### **FINDINGS:**

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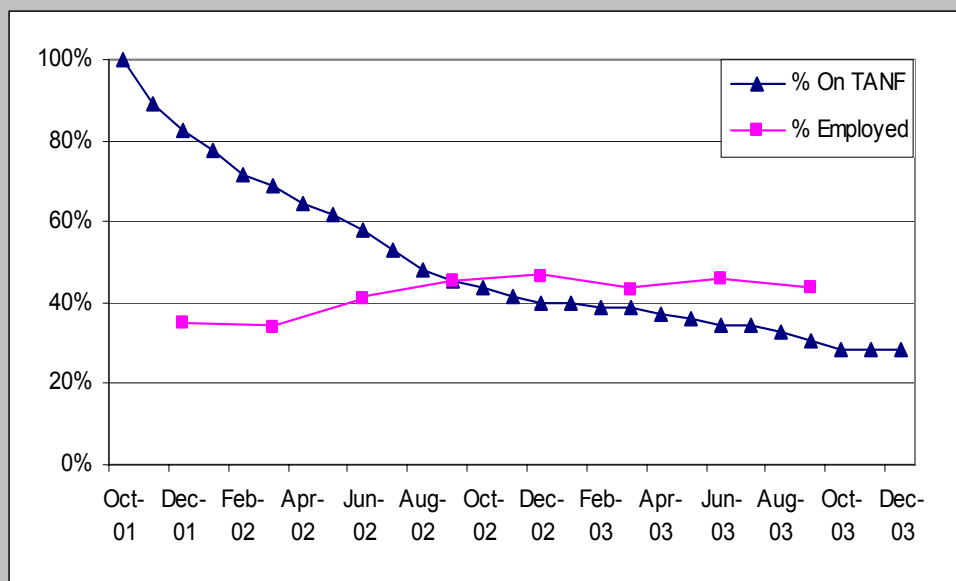
- **The proportion of families receiving TANF fell steadily over time after October 2001 when all received TANF. By the end of 2002, the percent of families on TANF had leveled off at about 40 percent.**
- **Following October 2001, about 60 percent of those not on TANF were employed. The proportion of those on TANF and employed was much less steady over the same time period, ranging from 30 to 40 percent.**
- **From the end of 2001 when all were on TANF, to the beginning of 2003, completion of Job Search rose from about 50 percent to 70 percent. Completion of the Job Search Workshop rose from about 35 percent to 45 percent.**
- **Fewer respondents had completed Pre-Employment Training, Community Jobs, or Job Skills Training (less than 10 percent in October 2001), though the rates increased steadily over time.**
- **The results suggest that the Job Search without the Workshop increased employment and earnings. Pre-Employment Training and Job Search with the Workshop are also estimated to have increased employment.**

## TANF and Employment for the 2001 Cohort

Figure 1 shows the proportion of the WFS respondents on TANF in each month since October 2001 when all received TANF. The proportion of employed respondents is shown for each quarter.

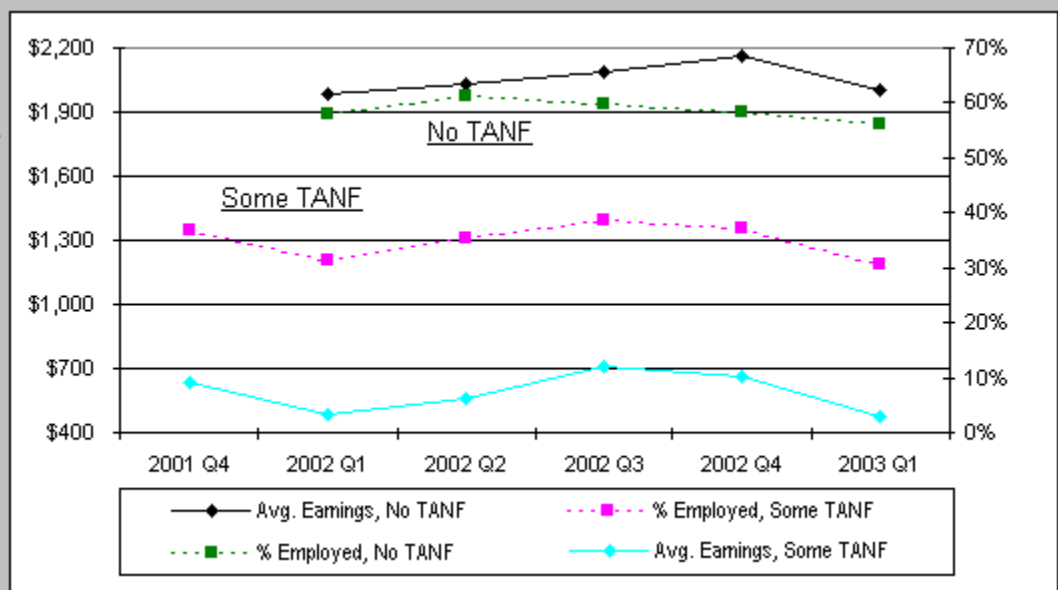
The proportion of families receiving TANF fell steadily over time. After two years, slightly under 30 percent of families were on TANF. Over roughly the same period, employment rose from about 35 percent of the respondents to 45 percent. Employment peaked in the second quarter of 2003, at 46 percent.

**FIGURE 1:**  
**TANF RECEIPT**  
**AND**  
**EMPLOYMENT**  
**OVER TIME**



Throughout 2002, the proportion of respondents employed and not on TANF hovered around 60 percent, and dipped to 56% in the first quarter of 2003. The proportion of those on TANF and employed was more variable, ranging from 31% to 39%. Average earnings for all (not just workers), was about \$2,000 per quarter for those with no TANF in the quarter. For those receiving TANF in the quarter, average earnings ranged over time from just under \$500 to just over \$700.

**FIGURE 2:**  
**EMPLOYMENT**  
**AND EARNINGS**  
**BY TANF**  
**RECEIPT**



## Patterns in WorkFirst Activities

For this analysis, we chose five activities--Job Search, Job Search Workshop, Job Skills Training, Pre-Employment Training, and Community Jobs--because they focus on job readiness and were used by enough WFS respondents to adequately assess their impact. The activities ranged from a 1-week workshop (the Job Search Workshop) to a 9-month intensive work program (Community Jobs).

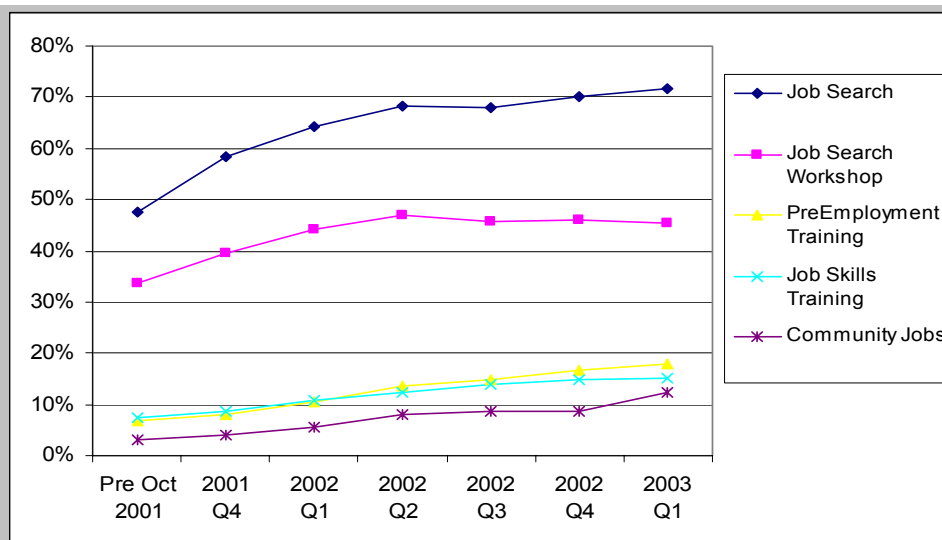
Description of WorkFirst Activities		
<b>Job Search</b>	Supported job search with guidance and resource rooms.	Up to 12 weeks
<b>Job Search Workshop</b>	Workshop to prepare clients to search for job.	1 week
<b>Job Skills Training</b>	Short-term skills training for specific occupation or skill.	Up to 6 weeks
<b>Pre-Employment Training</b>	Short-term training for specific job.	Up to 12 weeks
<b>Community Jobs</b>	Structured paid work program with support services	9 months

Figure 3 shows the proportion of respondents who completed WorkFirst activities prior to October 2001 (when all received TANF) and in the six quarters that followed. In the later quarters, the completion rates are shown for respondents who received TANF at least one month out of the quarter.

Almost 50 percent of respondents had completed a Job Search component prior to October 2001. About 35 percent had completed the Job Search Workshop. Among those still on TANF through the first quarter of 2003, the rates of Job Search completion rose to a peak of 70 percent. Completion of the Job Search Workshop held relatively steady, with a rate of about 45 percent throughout 2002 and into 2003.

Fewer respondents had completed the other work-related components, though the rates increased over time. Prior to October 2001, Pre-Employment Training and Job Skills Training had been completed by about 7 percent of respondents, while 3 percent had completed Community Jobs. Over the following six quarters, however, completion of each of these programs rose steadily. By the first quarter of 2003, nearly 20 percent of those still on TANF had completed Pre-Employment Training, 15 percent had completed Job Skills Training, and 12 percent had completed Community Jobs.

**FIGURE 3:**  
**COMPLETION OF**  
**WORKFIRST**  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**OVER TIME**



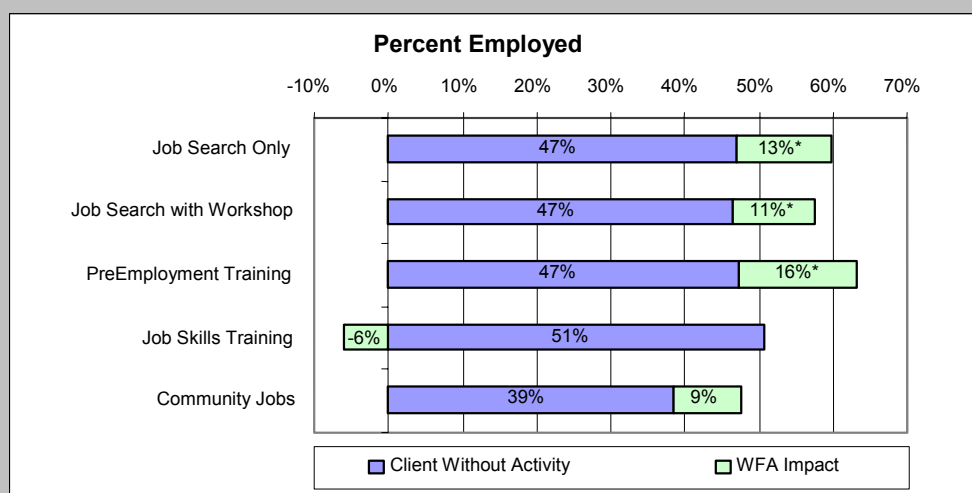
### **The Impact of WorkFirst Activities and Services on Employment and Earnings**

Multivariate analysis was used to account for the selection of clients into activities based on their job-readiness, the effects of multiple activities, and changes in the effects of activities over time.<sup>1</sup> The analysis controls for differences in past employment and earnings, demographic and personal characteristics, length of time spent on welfare, participation in other activities, and geographic location.

Figure 4 shows the estimated impact of WorkFirst activities completed in the first three quarters after October 2001 on employment in the third quarter of 2002 from the multivariate analysis. The results for the effects of the Job Search Workshop (with or without Job Search), Job Search without the workshop, Pre-Employment Training, Job Skills Training, and Community Jobs are shown. Estimates that are statistically significant have been marked.

<sup>1</sup> Multivariate analysis includes the sample of adults receiving welfare assistance in October 2001 (N=993). Activities completed from October 2001 to June 2002 were used to assess the impact in order to limit the changes in the content of activity and study the period when most of the WFS respondents were on TANF. For each activity, our estimate of the impact is based on completion of the activity between October 2001 and June 2002. We tested our ability to account for prior client characteristics by assessing the relationship of these recent activities on employment in the quarter preceding October 2001 (2001 third quarter).

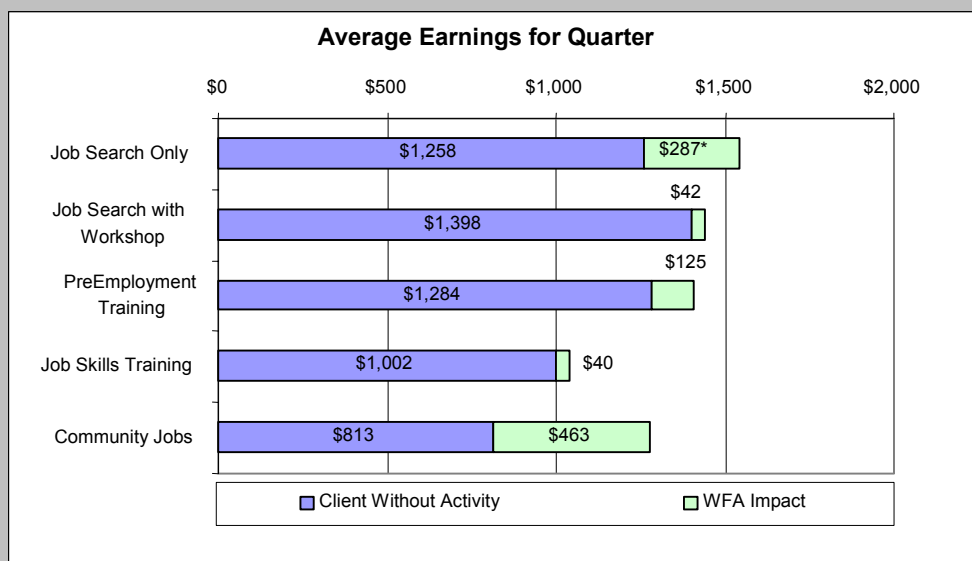
**FIGURE 4:**  
**IMPACT OF**  
**WORKFIRST**  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**ON EMPLOYMENT**  
**IN THIRD**  
**QUARTER**  
**OF 2002**



\*EFFECT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT AT 10 PERCENT LEVEL.

Similarly, Figure 5 shows the impact of WorkFirst activities on earnings for all respondents (not only workers).

**FIGURE 5:**  
**IMPACT OF**  
**WORKFIRST**  
**ACTIVITIES ON**  
**EARNINGS**  
**IN THIRD**  
**QUARTER OF**  
**2002**



\*EFFECT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT AT 10 PERCENT LEVEL.

The results suggest that the Job Search without the Workshop component increases employment and earnings. Pre-Employment Training is also estimated to increase employment. Job Search with the Job Search Workshop in the same period was estimated to increase employment, but not to significantly increase earnings.

These results suggest that 47 percent of those completing the Job Search alone or with the Workshop would have been employed in the absence of the workshop (given their characteristics). Job Search was estimated to increase employment by 13 percentage points to 60 percent. Job Search including the Workshop was estimated to increase employment by 11 percentage points to 58 percent. Similarly, earnings for those completing Job Search without the Workshop are estimated to have averaged \$1,258 without the activity and \$1,545 (\$1,258 + \$287) with the activity. We estimate that 47 percent of those completing Pre-Employment Training would have been employed if they had not had the training. The training is estimated to have increased employment to 63 percent.